

MSU IN BLOOM

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS



Getting to Know You

Interview with the
2016 Docent of the Year

Journey North

Tracking the
Monarch Migration

Mind your Peas and Q's

It's Spring Pea
Season

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MSU IN BLOOM

MSU HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS

ARTICLES

Journey North	01
Getting to Know You	02
Mind Your Peas and Q's	03
Spring Ephemerals	05
Student Section	07
Spring Program	10
Garden Day Registration	11
Curious Gardener	12
Upcoming Plant Sales	13
2017 Garden Memberships	14

UPCOMING EVENTS

Build a Bee Hotel Workshop	April 5
Spring Program	April 29
Spring Plant Sale	May 19/20
Exotic Flavors Workshop	May 23

Cover Photo: This Peacock butterfly was the first butterfly to hatch in the 2017 "Butterflies in the Garden" exhibit in the Indoor 4-H children's Garden.



Winter Aconite by William Rowan

Visit

[HTTP://WWW.HRT.MSU.EDU/OUR-GARDENS/](http://www.hrt.msu.edu/our-gardens/)

JOURNEY NORTH

TRACKING THE MONARCH MIGRATION

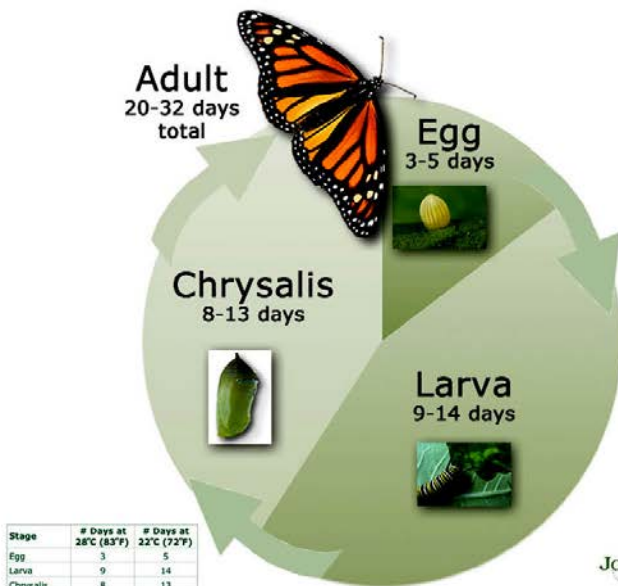
By Jessica Wright
Education Coordinator

As we get closer and closer to spring the Monarch butterfly starts the second phase of its migration back north. These amazing winged wonders start their epic migration back north in early March. As they make their way back to our gardens they stop along the way to feed, mate and lay eggs. As gardeners we can help Monarchs on their journey by planting both nectar and host plants in our gardens.

As with most butterfly species Monarchs have a specific host that they can lay their eggs on. The host for a monarch can be anything in the *Asclepias* genera. Plants include *A. curassavica*, *A. tuberosa*, and *A. syriaca*. These plants can play host to both larva and adults. When planting butterfly host make sure to plant in full sun and in an area where you can keep an eye on them just in case you have visitors!

If you would like to see where the Monarchs are on the journey back north you can track their voyage on the website <http://learner.org/jnorth/>. This website is a global study that asks citizen scientists to be the researcher and reporters. Monarchs are not the only migratory animal that you can track their voyage on the website you can also see the progress of hummingbirds, grey whales and many others.

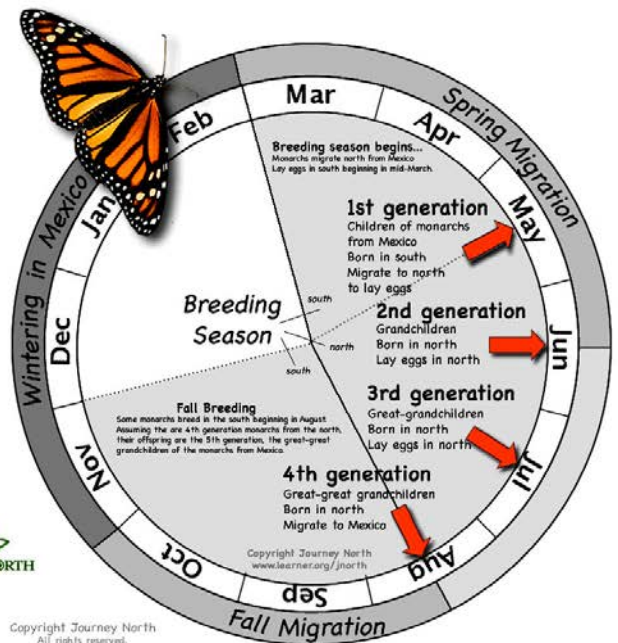
Monarch Butterfly Life Cycle Monarch Butterfly Annual Cycle



Stage	# Days at 28°C (83°F)	# Days at 22°C (72°F)
Egg	3	5
Larva	9	14
Chrysalis	8	13
Total Days	20	32

About one month for one generation

Development rates are temperature dependent. Monarchs develop more quickly in warm temperatures and more slowly in cool temperatures.



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GETTING TO KNOW YOU

BY BETHANY TROY
PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER



Learn more about our 2016 Docent of the Year, Juanita Elkins, through our Q&A below!

When did you first start volunteering for the gardens? I took the Master Gardening class in the fall 2012, and started volunteering before the class completed at Allen Neighborhood garden.

What interested you in volunteering with us? I like the activities in the 4-H garden and Horticulture gardens.

What other hobbies do you enjoy? Basketweaving, beadweaving, and sewing

What is your favorite area of the garden? I really like the butterfly garden, plant sale, and working the informational booth.

Describe some of the tasks you perform while volunteering with us. Working with the children during activities and learning about different plants during the plant sale.

What do you enjoy the most about volunteering with us? Working and talking to different people during activities, and learning.

Do you have a favorite memory while volunteering? Working in the butterfly garden and a little boy fell in the water. The parents were so apologetic – and the surprised look on the tykes face.

What is your favorite plant? I can't pick just one, when the perennials start coming up in the spring I can't wait to see which one will flower first.

What are you looking forward to this season in terms of gardening or volunteering? Butterfly Garden, the Info Booth, the Symposium in January, and the conference in April.



MIND YOUR PEAS AND Q'S

BY DANIEL BULKOWSKI
GARDENS AND GREENHOUSE MANAGER

Well St. Patrick's Day has come and gone, did you plant your peas? In case you didn't know, that's when an old wives' tale would recommend planting your peas. I haven't talked to any old wives lately, but most years, that could be an about right recommendation. That is, as long as the soil temperature is above 40F, and not overly wet from rain or snow. Over 60F would be a better temperature range for seedling development. Peas can, and are, planted directly into the garden soil as long as the soil can be worked up properly. However, I have a friend (who shall be nameless, let's call him Dean) that starts his pea plants inside. He uses peat pots so the entire pot can be planted with minimal transplant shock. Two pea seeds are sown in each pot. It takes about 8 to 10 weeks to go from seed to harvest. He always has an excellent and overabundant harvest of pods. Dean also trellises the plants, a key reason for his success he insists. And his soils are amended with his own compost and tilled in. Some recommendations can be found to fertilize the pea plants. But Dean does not need to because of the adequate amount of compost he uses.

Garden peas (*Pisum sativum*) are categorized into two main groups: edible podded and non-edible podded. The non-edible podded, or shelling peas, are your average garden pea that is grown to maturity and the peas in the pod are nice and plump. The peas are then eaten fresh, or the pod allowed to dry down so that the dried peas can be shelled out. I love a good pea soup made with smoked ham hocks. Edible podded peas are further divided into two groups, snap and snow. Snap peas can be grown on to maturity, or the pod can eaten fresh. With snow peas, the pod is eaten fresh or used in stir fry, before the peas inside are allowed to develop. The annual flower Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*) is a different genus altogether and can be used as a fragrant cut-flower. It is less than desirable as a culinary treat.

If you're out to dinner sometime at a swanky restaurant, and the garnish looks like a thin green spaghetti, more than likely you're looking at pea shoots and tendrils. The tendrils are edible and tasty, eaten fresh or stir fried. I had a sandwich a couple of weeks ago from a local place that used pea tendrils on their sandwich. There have been varieties of peas developed, in the edible podded group, that have an excessive amount of tendrils. They are called "afila" type peas, in case you're ever on Jeopardy. Sugar Magnolia and Feisty are two types that have an above average amount of tendrils in addition to pods.

So, if you haven't sown your peas because you're waiting for warmer weather, there are many types of peas to choose from. From the very small, like Tom Thumb or Patio Pride at 6 to 12" vines, to larger types that can vine up to 10'. Though most average about 3' tall. There are also peas with colored pods. Golden Sweet has yellowish pods and Royal Snow has purple ones. Whether you will be sowing directly into the garden soil or starting them inside, you still have time to Pinterest some good recipes before they're harvested. And if you have a really good one, feel free to share that with us.





SPRING EPHEMERALS

BY BETHANY TROY
PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER

Years ago, I remember rummaging through the woods, in awe of the life springing out from the forest floor as winter started to recede back into its slumber. Yellow flower petals of winter aconite were playfully peeking out through the pure white snow, indicating that the frigid temperatures were finally coming to an end. Since then, I have spent each spring eagerly awaiting the short-lived ephemeral arrival. I found myself traversing undisturbed woodlands early enough to find them just emerging. This gives you the excuse to hike multiple times in the early spring (if not every day) to watch them develop and eventually flower. Not only do these little beauties get you to stop and enjoy their company, they may even inspire a life long horticultural journey for a budding plant enthusiast – it worked pretty well for me!





ERYTHRONIUM AMERICANUM



ERYTHRONIUM SPP.

The most fascinating ecological trait of spring ephemerals isn't necessarily that they live, set seed, and die back before deciduous foliage shades the forest floor. It happens to be between their little-known relationship with ants, who are attracted to their seeds with fleshy coverings, called elaiosomes. These are carried back to the colony to feed their young, as they are high in fats and perfect for their development. The leftover seeds are then thrown into the ant's nutrient-rich compost pile, where the seeds germinate and begin life again the following year. One single ant colony can collect over 1000 seeds in one season, transporting them only feet away from their original source. This explains why you see such dense colonies of spring ephemerals in the forest, and why they may be so slow to spread. The process of fruit and seed dispersal by ants is known as myrmecochory. You can impress your family and friends with that bit of information at your next holiday gathering!

Don't forget to look for other surprising life on your adventure. Early spring is when mosses shoot up sporophytes (reproductive structures), insects start scurrying, and fungi start appearing all over the forest floor. Enjoy your spring ephemeral, moss, and fungi scavenger hunt! Beware - this activity can be quite addicting!



SPOROPHYTES ON MOSS



SPRING FUNGI

STUDENT SECTION

BY DAEDRE MCGRATH
ANNUAL TRIAL GARDEN MANAGER



Paul Klein was our 2016 Trial Garden Intern, generously sponsored by the Western Michigan Greenhouse Association and Metropolitan & Detroit Flower Growers Association. Learn more about Paul and his experience working at the gardens.

1) What is your major and minor (if applicable) and when do you graduate?

I am a Biology major with an Environmental Studies minor at Central Michigan University. I will graduate in May 2017.

3) What made you decide to apply for a position at the MSU Gardens?

I decided to apply to the gardens for a couple of reasons. I had taken a few plant courses for my major and decided that plants are pretty neat! I wanted to learn more so when I saw this position posted, I did not hesitate to apply. I also always wanted to experience being on the Michigan State campus. It was much larger and more urban than I was used to, it was a great experience!

4) What was your favorite part of working at the Gardens?

My favorite part of this job was working outside! It was a beautiful Summer and I spent a lot of my time weeding and watering our plants after they had been planted. I had many pleasant conversations with my co-workers too, making our shared time together very memorable to me. An added thing I really enjoyed was driving around the gardens on the Gators we were provided!

5) What was the weirdest thing that happened while working at the Gardens?

A funny thing happened when I was working a weekend! This weekend was particularly nasty, with rain and high winds. That meant that we had indoor work to do. Which was good, I wouldn't have wanted to be outside when the storms rolled through. Sure enough, a huge surge of wind and rain came through and took a piece of the greenhouse siding with it! I was shocked that it had come off the side of the building. It was a huge piece, at least 10 feet long! When I told my bosses, they were quite shocked as well. (Continued on next page)

6) What are three new things you learned while working at the Gardens?

Being the annual trial garden intern, I worked with all of the annuals that we had access to. Just learning the names of the flowers and other plants was fascinating to me. An added bonus was being taught how to care for these plants, as they do not require the exact same care! The difference between a living, healthy plant and a dead one is sometimes a very small line and I experienced that first-hand. I also learned proper gardening techniques, such as watering, mulching, and edging.

7) What is a new skill you acquired while working at the Gardens?

I learned many new skills during this internship, but one that really sticks out to me is I learned how to properly evaluate a plant's growing performance. I worked in a Trial garden, meaning we were growing new plants that had never been on the market before. It was fascinating to watch them grow and learn what signs to look at each week as the plants matured. If the leaves of a plant turned yellow, there may have been a nutrient deficit that we would have to address or the pH of the soil may have needed to be adjusted.

8) How did your experience at the Gardens influence your professional/personal life?

The gardens influenced my life in a very positive way. Not only was it the best job I had ever had, I also met some very nice people that I will remain in contact with. Since it was an internship, I did manage to list this as a positive experience on my resume, having a great reference and recommendation letter to go along with that. As far as my personal life goes, this position really allowed me to learn constantly and showed me that life-long learning is a must. I will also grow a garden every year from now on, I tried one for the first time while working and I was very successful in growing green beans and carrots! (Continued on next page)



Paul Klein and Daedre McGrath evaluating in-ground petunias (above) and container petunias (below)



9) What piece of advice would you give to this year's crew of new student employees?

I would tell prospective students to have a positive attitude and be willing to do whatever is asked of you. I had a great time doing all sorts of little tasks and I was happy to do them. This kind of work style is really appreciated not just here, but anywhere you go! A little interest and initiative can really go a long way.

10) If you could chose three words that describe you experience working at the gardens, what would they be?

I'd have to go with Learning, Passion, and Fun!

11) What are your career goals?

I have many interests when it comes to Biology, I'd like to get into Environmental Consulting or any job that has a mixture of field and lab-based work. But I'm flexible, as long as I find a job even somewhat related to science, I'll be a happy guy!

12) What is your favorite non-edible plant?

I was really interested in a new Petunia coming on the market called the Night Sky Petunia. I used it while designing my own container to be put on display in the gardens. The flowers had varying amounts of purple and white in them, looking like a starry night! The pigment in these flowers would actually change as they grew, an interesting side effect!

13) What is your favorite edible plant?

I really love green beans! I would pick some from the vegetable trial garden and it's a great feeling to have fresh picked vegetables for dinner after a long, hard day.

14) What was your favorite snack on snack-days?

Once in a while, we would be provided ice cream from the dairy store! Also, on really hot days, we were given popsicles! A nice way to cool down before going back into the sun.



Lawrence Sobson (left) and Paul Klein (right) digging post-holes to re-install the freshly painted Annual Garden sign.

The MSU Horticulture Gardens presents
Spring Program 2017

Creativity in Bloom

Saturday, April 29 / 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Featuring Janet Macunovich, Art Cameron & Daedre McGrath

Information & Register: www.hrt.msu.edu/springprogram



SPRING PROGRAM

CREATIVITY IN BLOOM

Saturday, April 29, 2017
8:00AM – 4:00PM

By Jennifer Sweet
Program Coordinator

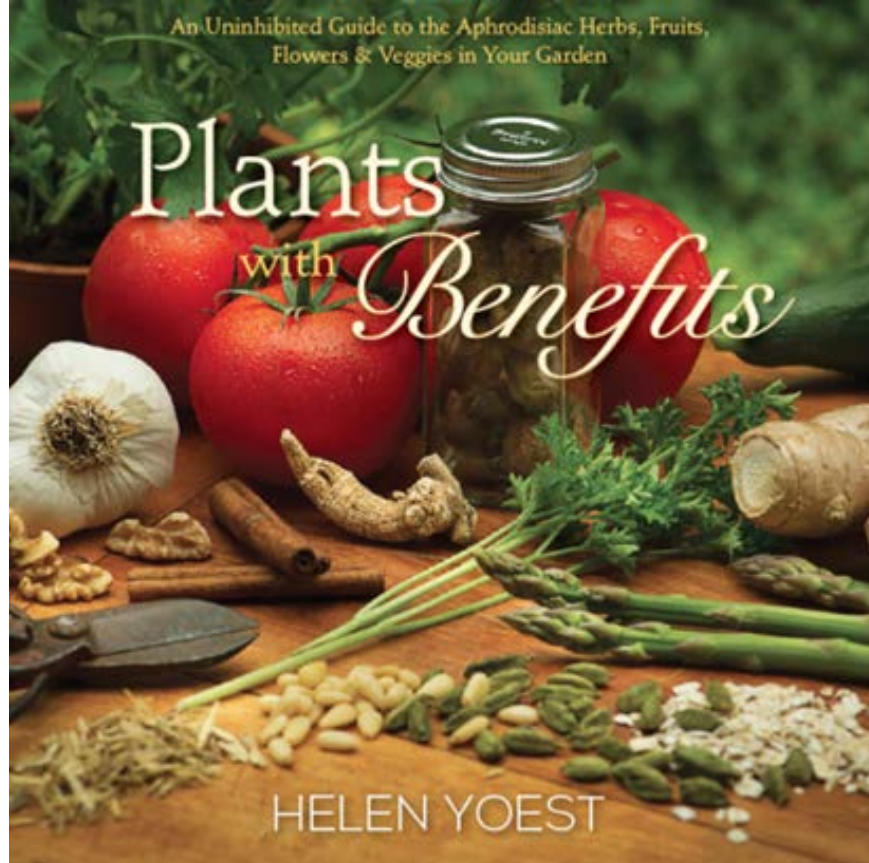
As the dreary days of winter continue, who doesn't love a reminder that Spring is on its way? Register today for Spring Program 2017, Creativity in Bloom, and get ready to give your garden the "wow" factor! Janet Macunovich, Art Cameron, and Daedre McGrath will captivate attendees with exciting and practical ways to get creative, adding color and flair to your Garden. You'll leave feeling energized and ready to make your creativity bloom! Additionally, all attendees will get to create and take a combination planter of spring annuals.

\$70 for 2017 garden members, \$80 non-member

Registration includes four keynote presentations, coffee, lunch, parking, and materials

Additional details and Registration:

www.hrt.msu.edu/springprogram



GARDEN DAY

REGISTRATION OPENS
MID-APRIL

By Jennifer Sweet
Program Coordinator

Join us for Garden Day 2017 and add a little spice to your life with Helen Yoest! Registration will open mid-April.

In Helen's first presentation, *Plants with Benefits*, find out how 50 plants got their hot reputation – and what modern science has to say about it. You'll learn how to grow these plants in your home garden and take away some delicious recipes! In her second presentation, *My Forever Garden*, find out how to make your garden manageable and more desirable than ever, leading to years of future enjoyment!

Additionally, you'll enjoy your choice of two engaging workshops, Garden tours and perusing our Green Garden Marketplace for plants, garden accessories and other great buys! Also included is morning coffee, lunch, materials and parking.

2017 MSU Horticulture Garden Members: \$76
Non-members: \$86

For additional information, visit:
hrt.msu.edu/garden-day



The Curious Gardener Spring 2017 Workshops

Dormant Pruning

Tuesday February 28th 3:00-5:00PM

Are you finding yourself twiddling your green thumbs this winter? Come experience the art and benefits of dormant pruning; a wonderful excuse to get yourself outside to shape up your garden! We will review the tools used, discuss techniques and vocabulary, and train the eye to best perform your pruning tasks. Dress appropriately to go outdoors and practice some pruning in the gardens! Presented by Bethany Troy, Perennial Garden Manager. \$15 for Members/\$20 for Non-Members, parking not included.

Build a Native Bee Hotel

Wednesday April 5th, 3:00-5:00PM

Over 80% of wild plants require insects for pollination, as well as close to 100 major food and fiber crops. As colony collapse disorder continues to kill American honeybees, native bees are becoming increasingly important as pollinators. Because most native bees are solitary, they do not swarm, and rarely sting. You can attract native bees to your garden by creating nesting sites for them called bee hotels. Join us for this hands-on workshop where you will learn about native bees, then build and customize your very own native bee hotel. Presented by Daedre McGrath, Trial Garden Manager. \$30 for Members/\$35 for Non-Members, parking not included.

Exotic Flavors: Capture the World in Your Garden!

Tuesday May 23rd, 6:00-8:00PM

Learn to grow plants in your garden that will lend exotic flavors in your kitchen. Yes, even in Michigan, we can grow lemongrass, coriander, ginger, and of course several types of basil and mint. Based on experiences gained while traveling the world, Art and Marlene Cameron will cover plant selection, describe tricks for plant propagation and culture, and present cooking techniques for a range of plants used in cuisines from around the world: Thailand to Vietnam, and India to South America. Each attendee will plant a container of flavorful herbs to grow at home. \$20 for Members/ \$25 Non-Members, parking not included.

Register Online: <http://hrt.msu.edu/cg-register>

**Location: B109 Plant and Soil Sciences Building
1066 Bogue St., East Lansing, MI 48824**



UPCOMING PLANT SALES!!!

Support the Student Horticulture Association (SHA) at their annual Spring Show on April 22 & 23.

Funds raised are used for student scholarships and professional development opportunities.

WE INVITE YOU
TO THE 29th ANNUAL SPRING SHOW PLANT SALE
Hosted by the MSU Student Horticulture Association

April 22 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
April 23 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

**LANDSCAPES
AROUND THE
WORLD**

Come enjoy our indoor displays and selections of plants from around the world, including annuals, perennials, and shrubs.

*Located in the Plant and Soil Sciences Building
1066 Bogue St, East Lansing, MI 48823*

THEN...



PLANT SALE 2017!

To Benefit the MSU Horticulture Gardens

Great deals on hanging baskets, perennials, annuals, grasses, herbs, vegetable seedlings, shrubs, and more!

Fri. May 19th: 4-7 p.m. (*2017 MSU Garden Members only)

Sat. May 20th: 7 a.m.-2 p.m. (Public Sale)

Plant & Soil Sciences Bldg., MSU

www.hrt.msu.edu/our-gardens

Email: hgardens@msu.edu

Phone: 517-353-0328

BYOC: Bring Your Own Cart!



Support the MSU Horticulture Gardens at our annual Spring Plant Sale on May 19 & 20.

The MSU Horticulture Gardens are self-supporting, so the Spring Plant Sale is one of our most important fundraisers of the year! More information in our May eNewsletter!

* 2017 MSU Garden members receive 10% off Plant Sale purchases. This card does not entitle you to membership. A 2017 MSU Garden membership may be purchased at the door for \$35.

2017

Michigan State University
HORTICULTURE GARDENS

Become a MEMBER

Support the Gardens



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

2017 MEMBERSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

By Jennifer Sweet
Program Coordinator

If you enjoy traveling, a 2017 MSU Garden membership is a must have. Order today and visit hundreds of gardens for FREE, all throughout the year! See the link below for a list of participating Gardens across the nation, including Frederik Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids, MI!

Additional benefits include:

- VIP member-only Plant Sale invitation; come early for great buys!
- 10% discount on all Plant Sale purchases!
- Discounts on all MSU Horticulture programs!
- Invitation for two to our Wine & Chocolate Donor Reception!
- Free parking!
- Much more!

Benefits vary based on membership type.

For additional details and to order your membership, please visit:

www.hrt.msu.edu/our_gardens/garden_memberships

For a state-by-state list of gardens where you can use your reciprocal membership, please visit:

<http://ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/rap/find/statebystate>

DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

Create a lasting tribute to a special person, memory, or occasion by sponsoring a brick or bench in the Gardens. More information at www.hrt.msu.edu/our_gardens/donor_opportunities_bricks_and_benches



Larger donations can help sponsor a new garden, a summer student intern, our teaching programs, an art or cultural event, or support our endowment.

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